

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 1-27 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add claims 28-45 as indicated below.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-27 (canceled)

Claim 28 (new) A method for retrieving directory information associated with a referenced object in another directory entry in a single search comprising the steps of:

receiving a request to search a directory structure, wherein said request comprises a first distinguished name to identify a first entry in said directory structure, wherein said request specifies a particular number of levels in said directory structure;

identifying said first entry in said directory structure referenced by said first distinguished name, wherein said first entry contains an attribute referencing a second entry in said directory structure; and

retrieving directory information from said second entry without performing a new search if said second entry is located within said specified number of levels from said first entry in said directory structure.

Claim 29 (new) The method as recited in claim 28, wherein said attribute in said first entry comprises a pointer to said second entry.

Claim 30 (new) The method as recited in claim 28, wherein said attribute in said first entry comprises a second distinguished name.

Claim 31 (new) The method as recited in claim 30, wherein said second entry in said directory structure is identified by said second distinguished name.

Claim 32 (new) The method as recited in claim 28, wherein said request comprises a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) request.

Claim 33 (new) The method as recited in claim 28, wherein said directory structure is a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) structure.

Claim 34 (new) A computer program product embodied in a machine readable medium for retrieving directory information associated with a referenced object in another directory entry in a single search comprising the programming steps of:

- receiving a request to search a directory structure, wherein said request comprises a first distinguished name to identify a first entry in said directory structure, wherein said request specifies a particular number of levels in said directory structure;

- identifying said first entry in said directory structure referenced by said first distinguished name, wherein said first entry contains an attribute referencing a second entry in said directory structure; and

- retrieving directory information from said second entry without performing a new search if said second entry is located within said specified number of levels from said first entry in said directory structure.

Claim 35 (new) The computer program product as recited in claim 34, wherein said attribute in said first entry comprises a pointer to said second entry.

Claim 36 (new) The computer program product as recited in claim 34, wherein said attribute in said first entry comprises a second distinguished name.

Claim 37 (new) The computer program product as recited in claim 36, wherein said second entry in said directory structure is identified by said second distinguished name.

Claim 38 (new) The computer program product as recited in claim 34, wherein said request comprises a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) request.

Claim 39 (new) The computer program product as recited in claim 34, wherein said directory structure is a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) structure.

Claim 40 (new) A system, comprising:

a memory unit operable for storing a computer program for retrieving directory information associated with a referenced object in another directory entry in a single search; and

a processor coupled to said memory unit, wherein said processor, responsive to said computer program, comprises:

circuitry for receiving a request to search a directory structure, wherein said request comprises a first distinguished name to identify a first entry in said directory structure, wherein said request specifies a particular number of levels in said directory structure;

circuitry for identifying said first entry in said directory structure referenced by said first distinguished name, wherein said first entry contains an attribute referencing a second entry in said directory structure; and

circuitry for retrieving directory information from said second entry without performing a new search if said second entry is located within said specified number of levels from said first entry in said directory structure.

Claim 41 (new) The system as recited in claim 40, wherein said attribute in said first entry comprises a pointer to said second entry.

Claim 42 (new) The system as recited in claim 40, wherein said attribute in said first entry comprises a second distinguished name.

Claim 43 (new) The system as recited in claim 42, wherein said second entry in said directory structure is identified by said second distinguished name.

Claim 44 (new) The system as recited in claim 40, wherein said request comprises a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) request.

Claim 45 (new) The system as recited in claim 40, wherein said directory structure is a Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) structure.